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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, humanities instruction at two-year colleges has been identified with transfer education. Since enrollments are decreasing in humanities classes, the future viability of the humanities curriculum will depend on providing humanities instruction to vocational students. This fact sheet discusses some obstacles to changing the humanities curriculum and describes four methods which have been used to make the necessary curricular changes: (1) interdisciplinary courses which provide instruction in two or more subject areas; (2) specialized courses for targeted populations, such as "Literature for Technicians"; (3) modules or short instructional segments that can be inserted into occupational programs; and (4) sharing resource materials and personnel. In addition, seven interdisciplinary courses or modules which have been offered by two-year colleges are briefly described, with contact people listed for each program. A 13-item bibliography is included. (MAB)

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Fact Sheet

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Incorporating Humanities Instruction In Vocational Programs

WHY SHOULD COMMUNITY COLLEGES INCREASE THEIR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE VOCATIONAL STUDENTS WITH INSTRUCTION IN THE HUMANITIES?

Traditionally, humanities instruction at two-year colleges has been identified with transfer education. But the varying educational needs of nontraditional students at today's community college have caused humanities educators to reassess their role. Decreasing enrollments in traditional lower division courses have relegated the humanities to an increasingly smaller position within the college's nstructional program. The future viability of the humanities curriculum, then, will depend to a large degree on the ability of community college educators to provide humanities instruction for thegrowing number of vocationally oriented students. Koehnline writes that humanities and vocational education can no longer be separated: Today, when education conveys no automatic social distinction, and when leisure is not assured except for the retired and the unemployed, he humanities serve changed human needs'' (Koehnline, p. 84). As an aid to community college practitioners faced with the task of developing a humanities component for vocational students, this Fact Sheet outlines some common approaches to this problem; lists interdisciplinary humanities modules or courses that have been or are offered by some two-year colleges; and provides an ERIC bibliography of materials dealing with humanities instruction for vocational students.

WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES?

Changing humanities from a strict collegiate orientation to one that also serves the needs of vocational students depends on cooperation between faculty in both areas. Instructors cannot afford to remain isolated in their own departments, even though some humanities faculty are not enthusiastic about teaching nontransfer students and some occupational students studies: interdisciplinary courses; specialized courses for targeted populations; modules; and the formal or informal sharing of materials and personnel between vocational and humanities departments. Brief descriptions of each method are presented below.and faculty feel that the humanities are ``those damned classes required for graduation'' (Slonecker, p.2). In addition, humanities faculty who rely primarily on the lecture method need to become proficient in nontraditional instructional techniques, such as team teaching, modular instruction, and the use of audio-visual materials. As humanities programs shift their orientation from transfer to occupational students, faculty need to reassess long accepted attitudes toward, and approaches to, humanities instruction.

WHAT METHODS HAVE BEEN USED?

Advisory boards often resist humanities course requirements. It seems more productive to adopt nontraditional instructional methods and to insert humanities modules in vocational courses. Changing traditional humanities courses to reflect the noncollegiate concerns of vocational students is also feasible.

Beckwith (1981) identifies four commonly used methods of incorporating the humanities in vocational studies: interdisciplinary courses; specialized courses for targeted populations; modules; and the formal or informal sharing of materials and personnel between vocational and humanities departments. Brief descriptions of each method are presented below.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

Interdisciplinary courses provide instruction in two or more subject areas and may be used to expose the student to a range of topics wider than that possible in a traditional lecture course. Thus, the interdisciplinary approach is particularly useful to vocational students who are not preparing for further study in the humanities.

Several methods have been used to structure interdisciplinary courses: utilizing a team of instructors representing two or more subject areas; examining a central topic, such as American History, through art, literature, music, and other disciplines; examining the interrelationships between various topics, such as the impact of technology on contemporary society; and providing "tandem courses," i.e., classes on two topics such as economics and business, which are taught back to back during the same quarter or semester.

While showing much promise, interdisciplinary courses are not trouble free; they require an adjustment on the part of faculty and students who are more used to the privacy of their own classroom. Schulz notes that ``successful team teaching often intimidates the students and relies on a harmonious interplay of personalities which are willing to compromise'' (Schulz, p.19). Planning for interdisciplinary courses, then, must take into account student and faculty attitudes as well as the instructional subject matter.

SPECIALIZED COURSES FOR TARGETED POPULATIONS

In these courses, humanities subject matter is examined in relation to the career interests of specific vocational students. Several ethics courses have been developed for students in allied health, business, law enforcement, and other vocational fields. Examples of other courses include ``Literature for Technicians'' (Slonecker) and ``Humanities and Civil Engineering'' (Schulz). Such courses remove the mystic of academe from the humanities and allow students to relate the humanities to everyday life.

MODULES

Modules, or ``short (instructional) segments that can be inserted into the occupational programs themselves'' (Cohen,

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, p.68), can also be used to demonstrate the value of the humanities to a student's occupational life. Modules may consist of informal guest lectures; one-credit, day-long seminars; or the integration of a humanities topic in a vocational course through specially prepared video presentations or other instructional materials. Many ethics modules have been developed for vocational courses, but less work has been done in preparing literature or history modules that are geared towards students in automotive, electronics, and other technical programs (Cohen, p.68).

In considering modules, two problems should be kept in mind. First, planning and implementing modules is a difficult task requiring great care. Schulz points out that ``they (modules) require careful planning and excellent teaching, making certain that the material is interfaced with the remaining parts of the course, so that the students are not left with fragments'' (Schulz, p.19). Second, planners need to consider the impact of a module on the transferability of credit for allied health and other vocational courses. Koehnline notes that ``If the standard course description calls for 16 weeks of clinical instruction, one cannot insert five weeks of something else...and live up to the expectations on which most current transfer agreements are based'' (Koehnline, p.83). Accordingly, Koehnline suggests that courses with a formal and extensive humanities module be planned with additional hours and fractional credit.

Specific factors that need to be considered in planning humanities modules for vocational courses are outlined by Edwards (1979).

SHARING RESOURCE MATERIALS AND PERSONNEL

On a less formal scale, humanities instructors are providing colleagues in vocational departments with bibliographies and other humanities-related materials. In some instances, humanities instructors give informal guest lectures in vocational courses or write case studies in ethics for business and other occupational classes. Such informal activities are a first step toward the cooperation required in developing interdisciplinary courses or humanities modules.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THESE COURSES, MODULES, AND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS?

The following colleges have developed interdisciplinary courses, modules, and other techniques to provide vocational and other students with nontraditional humanities instruction. The names of contact persons at each college are provided.

Bristol Community College offers three interdisciplinary courses of value to students in business, criminal justice, nursing, and other vocational fields. The courses are entitled ``The Criminal in Literature and Art,'' ``Business Ethics and the Arts,'' and ``Coping with Life and Death.'' Obtain information from Paul Fletcher; Divisional Chair, Arts, English, Humanities, and Language; Bristol Community College; 777 Elsbree Street; Fall River, Massachusetts 02720. Telephone number (617) 678-2811.

-Chemeketa Community College offers an interdisciplinary ``Oceans'' course drawing from the arts, humanities, and the sciences in an investigation of the world's oceans. Obtain information from *William G. Slonecker, Chemeketa Community College, 4000 Lancaster* Drive NE, Salem, Oregon 97305. Telephone number (503) 399-5000.

Clark Technical College offers a team-taught, interdisciplinary humanities course entitled ``Work and Human Fulfillment.'' In this course, work is explored in relation to myth, other cultures, human nature, and justice. The college also offers (1) one-credit ``trailer courses'' entitled ``Law and You as a Worker,'' ``Work and Leisure,'' and ``Human Values in the Marketplace;'' and (2) tandem courses in economics and ethics. These tandem courses are taught in adjacent rooms; students share a common syllabus and occasionally meet jointly. For further information, contact Lloyd Monnin, Chairman, General Education Department, Clark Technical College, 570 East Leffels Lane, Springfield, Ohio 45501. Telephone number (513) 325-0691.

For the past year, Edmonds Community College has offered several one-credit, interdisciplinary humanities modules. Topics for the modules include the American labor movement as portrayed in film, literature, local history, and song; marriage and divorce; and women in the workplace. The college also offers a core course entitled ``Humanities for Vocational Students.'' For further information contact Mary Hale, Edmonds Community College, 20000 68 Avenue West, Wynnwood, Washington 98036. Telephone number (206)775-4444.

Hagerstown Junior College has, since 1973, offered interdisciplinary humanities courses. One course, ``The Arts: A Creative Synthesis,'' uses a multi-media approach to an examination of the arts. Another course, ``Man: Some Human Perspectives,'' examines mankind from scientific, theological, psychological, sociological, ecological, and historical perspectives. Information about the courses can be obtained from Michael H. Parsons, Dean of Instruction, Hagerstown Junior College, 751 Robinwood Drive, Hagerstown, Maryland 221740. Telephone number (301) 731-2800.

Faculty at Johnson County Community College have developed a set of humanities modules for various occupational programs (Beckwith, pp.61-62). These modules include (1) classroom presentations on the history of law enforcement for courses in criminal justice; (2) case studies on ethics for business students, and (3) modules on medical ethics for nursing students. Multi-media modules have also been developed on the history and impact of concrete production and on the discrimination suffered by the handicapped. For further information, contact Landon Kirchner, Johnson County Community College, College Blvd. at Quivira Road, Overland Park, Kansas 66201. Telephone number (913) 888-8500.

With special grant funds, Highline Community College developed and offered an interdisciplinary course entitled ``Business Civilization: A Literary Review.'' The course was taught by humanities, business, and journalism faculty; students examined the portrayal of American business in fiction, drama, and poetry. For further information contact Catharine Harrington, Humanities Division Chair, Highline Community College, Pacific Highway South, Midway, Washington 98031. Telephone number (206) 878-3710.

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WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

The above listing represents only a small sample of the efforts undertaken by the nation's two-year colleges to provide humanities instruction for vocational students. A more in-depth study should include a review of the literature. The following bibliography cites journal articles and documents in the ERIC database on the topic of humanities for vocational students. The ERIC documents (those tagged with an ``ED'' number) are available on microfiche at over 700 libraries across the country; please contact the Clearinghouse for a directory of ERIC microfiche collections in your area.

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Schulz, Beate A. ``Strengthening Humanities in Occupational Curricula: A Brief Review of Strategies, Sources, and Models.'' Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Northeast Regional Conference on English in the Two-Year College. New York, October 16-18, 1980. 32pp. (ED 202 508)

Slonecker, William G. ``Strengthening Humanities in the Occupational Curriculums at Chemeketa Community College.'' Paper presented at the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges National Endowment for Humanities conference on Strengthening the Humanities, Los Angeles, February 4-7, 1981. 30pp. (ED 202 561)